

25 Years
Annual Administration



Kansas Communities That Care
Student Survey



Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey Overview and Frequently Asked Questions

Fiscal Year 2020

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Overview

The Kansas Communities That Care (KCTC) Student Survey has been administered annually at no cost to districts throughout the state since 1994-95. The 2019-20 KCTC Survey is the *26th annual administration* making Kansas a national leader for prevention assessment and evaluation. This survey tracks teen use of harmful substances such as alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. In addition, the survey provides a baseline for teen participation in, perception of, and attitudes toward both pro-social and anti-social behavior at the peer, school, family and community levels. It provides a measurable level of risk and protective factors that influence behavior, attitudes and opinions of Kansas teens.

Purposes of the KCTC Student Survey:

- **To develop a focus for planning** — Reports show Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey data provide an objective profile of problem behaviors, risk factors and protective factors that exist in your communities. This information highlights strengths and challenges, which will help in the development of a focused prevention plan. Data from the KCTC Survey is used to help school and community planners assess current conditions and prioritize areas of greatest need. Each risk and protective factor can be linked to specific types of interventions that have been shown to be effective in either reducing risks or enhancing protections. Survey results help schools and specific needs, and which strategies are most effective and known to produce results.
- **To establish a baseline to track progress** — Survey data provides a standardized measure of risk and protective factors and prevalence rates. This data can be used as a baseline for developing measurable outcomes that states and communities choose to target. Future surveys can then be used to track progress toward those outcomes. Data is also used to measure teen behaviors, attitudes and opinions, compared to teens in other state and national averages.
- **To conduct public relations and outreach** — Information from the survey can be used to build public awareness about the extent of problem behaviors and levels of risk and protection. It can help counteract misconceptions and denial about drug and alcohol use and other problem behaviors, and provides all stakeholders with a mutual understanding and foundation upon which to make prevention-planning decisions.

For the past 25 years, the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) Behavioral Health Services Commission has been dedicated to finding proven strategies and implementing outcomes-based planning in communities. Their hard work and dedication has earned Kansas national recognition and opportunities for continued funding.

Frequently Asked Questions

Greenbush – The Southeast Kansas Education Service Center, on behalf of the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Behavioral Health Services Commission, will conduct the 2019-20 survey to gather the information needed to plan important prevention and intervention programs to combat such problems as alcohol and other drug use, bullying, gambling and violence in our schools and communities.

What is the focus of the KCTC Student Survey?

The focus of the KCTC Student Survey is on:

- health risk behaviors—such as violence, alcohol, tobacco and other drug use—that can result in injury and/or impede positive development among youth,
- district-level measures of the KSDE adopted Social, Emotional and Character Development Model Standards,
- local baseline data on youth self-reported depression and suicide data to assist with planning for prevention, and
- identifying risk factors (predictors of problem behaviors) and protective factors (predictors of positive youth outcomes) which are attitudes and opinions that research has shown to be highly correlated with health risk behaviors.

Risk-focused prevention is based on a simple premise: *To prevent a problem from happening, we need to identify the factors that increase the risk of that problem developing and then find ways to reduce the risks.* Just as medical researchers have found risk factors for heart attacks such as diets high in fats, lack of exercise, and smoking, research has defined a set of risk factors for drug abuse.

Why should my school participate?

By participating in this survey, your school has the opportunity to learn more about the specific needs of its students. You will be provided a summary of results broken down by district and school, along with county and statewide results for comparison. School districts can then identify areas of need and choose programs and activities to impact these areas. Subsequent surveys are used to determine if the programs and activities that were implemented are having a positive impact. *Advantages of this survey are: it helps communities focus their efforts on identified areas of need; because it is a federally approved needs assessment, funders are more likely to look positively on it as an objective tool; and it helps support grant applications.*

There are grant applications that rely on district's KCTC participation in order to collect various data used in the selection process of grant recipients and to track progress toward program goals.

It is not just your district that relies on KCTC data, but many other community programs and services, and state agencies as well. These include community coalitions, the Kansas Prevention Collaborative, United Way, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Clubs, Kansas Children's Service League, Communities In Schools, and Juvenile Justice Authority to name a few. These groups count on annual survey data to apply for and evaluate grant funding that directly or indirectly benefit students, families and communities. These organizations often assist in providing services based upon needs identified through survey results. The value of these services to schools is incalculable in terms of increasing school attendance, improving the physical and mental health of students, increasing academic achievement and graduation rates, and reducing drop-out rates.

In addition, data from the student survey can be used to measure and track bullying and school climate/safety issues.

Does my school have to participate?

Participation in this survey is voluntary. Each school has a right to decline participation, just as each student has a right to decline. However, broad participation is needed to obtain accurate estimates and comparisons of these behaviors at state, county and local levels.

How often should my school participate?

Because we survey 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades, it is important to administer the survey *every* year to ultimately reach all students. It is also important that all students be given the opportunity to participate. As students move through school and have less structured schedules, it becomes more difficult to make sure that all students receive the opportunity to participate. In order to determine if prevention activities are successful, annual comparison data is needed. In addition, many community organizations may need *annual* data for grant evaluation requirements.

How many schools and students participate?

More than 49% of eligible Kansas students participated in the survey in 2019. There were more than 74,200 surveys submitted from 241 districts and private schools compared to approximately 63,500 students in 220 districts and private schools in 2018. When 2019 KCTC demographic data from the 49% of all eligible students responding was compared to the actual distribution of all eligible students in Kansas in 2019, the proportion was similar to that found for KCTC distribution in prior years when participation rates were substantially higher.

Does the 2015 Student Data Privacy Act apply to this survey?

Yes, this act requires written parental consent for surveys administered in schools. An information letter and consent form should be provided to parents of students in the 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grades at enrollment or at least a month prior to the date of administration. A copy of the survey is available for preview online at www.kctcdata.org and should be made available to parents.

Does the Protection of Pupil Rights (PPRA) amendment apply to this survey?

No, PPRA applies only to programs that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Funding for the Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey is provided by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, Behavioral Health Services.

How do we ensure collection of accurate data?

While the survey instrument is sound, attention and effort at the local level must be given to get accurate data. To ensure that the data collected is truly reflective of the school and community, there must be a high level of participation at all grade levels (80% is recommended). It is important that staff follow the instructions in the protocol and emphasize the importance of the survey. Some suspect that students do not take the survey seriously and therefore do not provide reliable data. We have found that while that may be true in limited instances or when staff do not follow protocol, trend data in Kansas is consistent from year to year, as well as with national data, indicating that kids do answer more honestly than what they might say. All data reported is based upon valid surveys, which are those determined valid after CTC data cleaning protocol and validity checks have been applied.

Are sensitive questions asked?

The survey is designed to measure key behaviors without asking sensitive questions, although it is possible that some schools may consider some questions sensitive. The survey includes questions related to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; violent behaviors; and related risk and protective factors, including 36 family domain questions. Unless questions in these topic areas are asked honestly and straightforwardly, we cannot know the degree to which Kansas youth engage in these health risk behaviors.

Can I see the survey?

The survey can be viewed at www.kctcdata.org. Click **About, View the KCTC Survey** or send an email to nancy.white@greenbush.org.

Is there more than one version of the survey?

Two versions of the survey are available: a Comprehensive version and an Alternate version.

1. **Comprehensive Version** – This is the full survey. It contains questions pertaining to CTC Risk and Protective Factors, including sections on Demographics & School Climate; Peer Influences; Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Usage; Community-Based Perceptions; and Family Domain.
2. **Alternate Version** – This is the shorter version. It contains all the same questions as the Comprehensive version but *excludes Family Domain* questions, which determine things like a student's view of parents' attitudes toward drugs/alcohol.

What is the optional module?

One optional module is available.

1. **Depression/Suicide Module** – This short module contains four questions related to depression and suicide ideation and attempt. It is available for use with both the comprehensive and alternate versions.

Questions:

- During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for **two weeks or more in a row** that you stopped doing some usual activities?
- Have you ever **seriously** thought about killing yourself?
- Have you ever made a **plan** about how you would kill yourself?
- Have you ever **tried** to kill yourself?

What formats are available?

The survey is available in both paper and online formats. To administer the survey online, all you need is a PC, Mac, Chromebook, iPad or Android tablet with an internet connection. We provide a link to the survey. Multiple classes can take the survey on the same computers. We encourage you to utilize the online format if possible.

What languages are available?

Paper and online surveys are available in both English and Spanish.

What if a student does not wish to participate?

Student participation in this survey is completely voluntary. At the beginning of the class period when the survey is administered, the teacher is asked to read a prepared statement that informs the students that their participation is voluntary. They will be allowed to decline to participate or to skip any question they prefer not to answer. Any student who declines the survey will be provided with an alternative activity while the survey is being administered. Parents also have the option of excusing their child from participation.

Who is eligible to take the survey?

Students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 in public and private schools in Kansas are eligible to take the survey.

Are there students who should not participate?

It is not recommended for students who cannot read and comprehend survey questions without assistance to participate in the survey. It is also not recommended for staff to read survey questions aloud to students.

Is student participation anonymous?

Yes, completely. Students will not be asked for their names on the questionnaire, nor will anyone be able to connect any individual student with his/her responses. Before they begin, students will be reminded that they should not write their name or other identifying information on the survey booklet. At the end of the class period, the survey booklets will immediately be gathered and placed in a sealed envelope. School staff will not see any one student's responses, but only summaries of results. To further guarantee anonymity, results will not be reported on any particular question without sufficient response from enough students. Similar guidelines are used for taking the survey online.

Paper forms are read with a scanner that automatically records into a database. All data are stored on an internal server at the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center. The server is not connected to the internet and passwords are required to log in. Aggregate data are uploaded to an external server that has a managed firewall, with two-factor authentication and encrypted passwords. This server houses the kctcdata.org website. District and building level data are password protected with only the respective school superintendent given the password. County and state data are publicly accessible if at least 25% of the county has taken the survey. The data are secure and have never been sold or given to any commercial group.

Is there a minimum number required to participate in the survey?

Because we guarantee anonymity for participating students, we do need to have a minimum 25% participation and at least 20 participants per aggregation level, in order to report data at that level (grade, school, district, county). If participation does not meet these levels, data are not reported on the website but may in some cases be obtained by contacting us directly.

How long does it take to complete the survey?

The survey will take approximately 50 minutes to complete and will be administered during a single class period, regardless of which version or format is used. Although it is expected that students will have sufficient time to complete the entire survey, they will be informed to not be concerned if they are not able to finish all questions. Survey administration should not be broken up into two separate sessions.

When should the survey be administered?

The survey is available for administration between November 1, 2019 and January 31, 2020. For best results, the survey should be administered to all schools in the district on the same day. Within a given school, the survey should be administered to all participating grades during the same class period. This will help avoid students discussing the questions with classmates who have not yet completed the survey and therefore biasing results. Avoid scheduling on Mondays or Fridays because the proximity of these days to the weekend has been shown to affect how students respond to the questions and possibly bias results.

How is the survey coordinated at each school?

Ideally, districts should identify one individual who will be responsible for coordinating all surveys in the district. This person might be a counselor, curriculum director or principal. This person should then be in charge of scheduling the survey in applicable classes and communicating this information to teachers. This person is also responsible for distributing surveys and instructions to schools and ensuring that all surveys are collected and returned to Greenbush in order to be scanned and the resulting data compiled.

Staff at the Greenbush – The Southeast Kansas Education Service Center will provide technical assistance and resources upon request. Let us know how we can help you.

When will results be made available to schools?

Results will be made available on the KCTC website (www.kctcdata.org) by June 1, 2020. (If you need specific district data prior to that time, please contact us.) Others may view actual state, county and Judicial District data, but in order to access specific district- or building-level data, a log-in password is needed. The password is provided only to superintendents to distribute at their discretion. Districts can also easily create customized reports from the data on the website, comparing their district to county or state averages. District summary reports will be sent to superintendents in September 2020 with some of the more commonly requested data and annual state comparisons.

How will this information be used?

Information from the student survey can be used to meet a variety of needs at community and state levels:

- ❖ The survey provides information that can be used to identify the prevalence and trends of various problem behaviors. This information can be used as input for resource and policy planning decisions, such as targeting prevention interventions. Those who receive the information may choose to share it with other community organizations.

- ❖ At state and federal levels, there are a variety of competing interests for limited resources. Results of this survey can and have been used to provide evidence for the high priority of those issues that are revealed to be important.
- ❖ Community coalitions in your area may be using local KCTC data for grant reporting. Some grants, such as the Drug Free Communities, Kansas Prevention Collaborative - Community Initiative (KPCCI), Partnerships for Success, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, School Climate Transformation, require KCTC participation in order to collect various data used to track progress toward program goals.

Survey Rationale and Description of Content

The 2020 Kansas Communities That Care Student Survey contains questions pertaining to CTC Risk and Protective Factors, including sections on Demographics & School Climate; Peer Influences; Drug/Alcohol/Tobacco Usage; Community-Based Perceptions; and Family Domain. This document specifies the importance and rationale for including each of these on the survey.

Research has provided a great deal of guidance on attitudinal and behavioral factors that place students at great risk for violence and substance use, and those that, on the positive side, provide protection against these unhealthy behaviors. For a complete description of the survey's Risk and Protective Factors, go to www.kctcdata.org and click *About*.

Section 1: Demographics & School Climate

Some basic background information (for example, age, grade level, ethnic group) is needed to ensure that students participating in the survey are generally representative of the statewide student population. Beginning in the late elementary grades, academic failure increases the risk of both drug abuse and delinquency. Factors such as liking school, spending time on homework, and perceiving the coursework as relevant are also negatively related to drug use. However, these analyses are conducted without specific identification of individual students so that anonymity is maintained throughout the survey.

Sample Items:

- *How old are you?*
- *What is the highest level of schooling your father/mother completed?*
- *During this school year, how often have you been bullied at school?*
- *There are a lot of chances for students in my school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.*

Section 2: Peer Influences

Research has shown that young people who are socially competent and engage in positive interpersonal relations with their peers are less likely to use drugs and engage in other problem behaviors. This section looks at the things associated with a student's peers, such as use of drugs/alcohol by a student's best friends, gang involvement, and interaction with antisocial peers.

Sample Items:

- *In the past year, how many of your best friends have (participated in school activities, made a commitment to stay drug-free, carried a handgun, sold illegal drugs, been arrested)?*
- *What are the chances you would be seen as cool if you made a commitment to stay drug free?*

Section 3: Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use

One of the target behaviors of interest in this survey is the extent to which students have used and are using alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, inhalants, methamphetamines, steroids, and prescription drugs. Asking these questions from year to year allows for local and statewide comparisons of changes in these patterns over time and provides important data-based direction for prevention efforts both locally and across the state.

Sample Items:

- *Have you ever, even once in your lifetime, used any of the following drugs (see above list)?*
- *During the past 30 days, how many times have you used each of the following drugs (see above list)?*
- *Think back over the last two weeks. How many times have you had five or more drinks in a row?*

Section 4: Community-Based Perceptions

Research has shown that such things as legal restrictions on alcohol and tobacco use have been followed by decreases in consumption, and that low levels of bonding to the neighborhood are related to higher levels of juvenile crime and drug selling.

Sample Items:

- *If a kid (drank some alcohol, carried a handgun in your neighborhood), would he or she be caught by the police?*
- *How wrong would most adults in your neighborhood think it was for kids your age to (smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol)?*

Section 5: Family Domain (Optional)

When children are raised in a family with a history of violence, or alcohol, tobacco or other drug use, the children are more likely to engage in these behaviors. Parents' failure to provide clear expectations or to monitor their children's behavior makes it more likely they will engage in drug abuse whether or not there are family drug problems. On the other hand, young people who feel they are a valued part of their family, or have parents, siblings, and other family members praise, encourage, and attend to things done well by their child, are less likely to engage in substance use and other problem behaviors.

Sample Items:

- *How often do your parents tell you they're proud of you for something you've done?*
- *Would your parents know if you did not come home on time?*
- *My family has clear rules about alcohol and drug use.*

Risk and Protective Factor Summary

Each of the above domains has its own set of risk and protective factors, which are different combinations of questions as they relate to students, their peers, school, community and family. Researchers have found that an interrelationship exists between adolescent drug abuse, delinquency, school dropout, and violence, and thus were able to identify risk factors for these problems. Then in order to prevent problem behaviors from happening, we need to identify and increase the factors that protect against problem behaviors and reduce the factors that increase the risks.

For a complete description of the survey's Risk and Protective Factors, go to www.kctcdata.org and click *About*.

Sample Protective Factor Profiles:

- *School Opportunities for Involvement*
- *Social Skills*
- *Community Rewards for Conventional Involvement*
- *Family Attachment*

Sample Risk Factor Profiles:

- *Peer Antisocial Behavior*
- *Academic Failure*
- *Gang Involvement*
- *Availability of Drugs*
- *Family Conflict*
- *Parental Attitudes Favorable to Drugs*